

Medicaid and Mental Health

Medicaid is a public health insurance program that covers over 72 million people, including many people with mental health conditions, as well as pregnant women, children, people with disabilities, working families and veterans. Forty percent of non-elderly adults on Medicaid have a mental health (MH) condition or substance use disorder (SUD).

Medicaid is a lifeline for many people with MH/SUD.

Medicaid:

- Pays for 1 in 4 dollars spent on vital MH/SUD treatment in the U.S. each year
- Provides coverage to 1 in 3 people with mental illness
- Allows more people with serious mental illness to access MH/SUD services
- Prevents people from delaying or skipping necessary health and mental health care

Cutting Medicaid funding or benefits would disproportionately harm people with MH/SUD.

NAMI opposes changes to Medicaid, including:

- **Funding cuts**, such as block grants, per capita caps, or reductions to the federal matching rate. These cuts would cause states to reduce benefits and eligibility to meet any funding gaps.
- **Work reporting requirements** to remain eligible for Medicaid. More than 90% of adults with Medicaid coverage are either already working, caregivers, students, or unable to work due to illness. Work reporting requirements have not been shown to lead to improvements in long-term employment but do add complex administrative burdens to states and people covered by Medicaid.
- **Eligibility or benefit cuts** that reduce access to care. Cutting benefits or reducing eligibility will lead to worse health outcomes for individuals.

Any of these changes would result in:

- Reduced access to MH and SUD treatment during a time of a well-documented mental health, overdose, and suicide crisis in the U.S.
- Poorer health outcomes, including more deaths by suicide and overdose
- Increased use of costly emergency departments and more frequent hospitalizations due to delayed care

People with mental illness rely on Medicaid.

Protecting Medicaid means protecting mental health care.



NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for people affected by mental illness. NAMI urges Congress not to use the Medicaid program to pay for other legislative priorities.

www.nami.org/medicaid